

difficult, because so little is known of real Byzantine Art previous to the seventh or eighth century. Certain, however, it is that the ornamentation of St. Sophia, so elaborately illustrated by H. Salzenberg, exhibits no analogy with our Celtic patterns; a much greater resemblance exists, however, between the latter and the early monuments of Mount Athos, representations of some of which are given by M. Didron, in his *Iconographie de Dieu*. In our Egyptian Plate X., Figs. 10, 13-16, 18-23, and Plate XI., Figs. 1, 4, 6, and 7, will be perceived patterns formed of spiral lines or ropes, which may have suggested the spiral pattern of our Celtic ornaments; but it will be perceived that in the majority of these Egyptian examples the spiral line is arranged like a S. In Plate X., Fig. 11, however, it is arranged C-wise, and thus to a greater degree agrees with our patterns, although wide enough in detail for them. The elaborate interlacements, so common in Moorsque ornamentation, agree to a certain extent with the ornaments of Slavonic, Ethiopic, and Syriac MSS., numerous examples of which are given by Silvestre, and in our *Paleographia Sacra Pictoria*; and as all these, probably, had their origin in Byzantium or Mount Athos, we might be led to infer a similar origin in the idea,—worked out, however, in a different manner by the Irish and Anglo-Saxon artists.

We have thus endeavoured to prove that, even supposing the early artists of these islands might have obtained the germ of their peculiar styles of ornament from some other source than their own national genius, they had, between the period of the introduction of Christianity and the beginning of the eighth century, formed several very distinct systems of ornamentation, perfectly unlike in their developed state to those of any other country; and this, too, at a period when the whole of Europe, owing to the breaking up of the great Roman Empire, was involved in almost complete darkness as regards artistic productions.

4. LATER ANGLO-SAXON ORNAMENT.—About the middle of the tenth century another and equally striking style of ornament was employed by some of the Anglo-Saxon artists, for the decoration of their finest MSS., and equally unlike that of any other country. It consisted of a frame-like design, composed of gold bars entirely surrounding the page, the miniatures or titles being introduced into the open space in the centre. These frames were ornamented with foliage and buds; but true to the interlaced ideas, the leaves and stems were interwoven together, as well as with the gold bars—the angles being, moreover, decorated with elegant circles, squares, lozenges, or quatrefoils. It would appear that it was in the south of England that this style of ornament was most fully elaborated, the grandest examples having been executed at Winchester, in the Monastery of St. Æthelwold, in the latter half of the tenth century. Of these the Benedictional belonging to the Duke of Devonshire, fully illustrated in the *Archæologia*, is the most magnificent; two others, however, now in the public library of Rouen, are close rivals of it; as is also a copy of the Gospels in the library of Trinity College, Cambridge. The Gospels of King Canute in the British Museum is another example which has afforded us the Figure 20 in Plate LXV.

There can be little doubt that the grand MSS. of the Frankish schools of Charlemagne, in which foliage was introduced, were the originals whence our later Anglo-Saxon artists adopted the idea of the introduction of foliage among their ornaments.

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